



Glory Denied: The Saga of Jim Thompson, America's Longest-Held Prisoner of War

Tom Philpott

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"Before Vietnam, the truth of war, of honor and courage, was obscure to many of us. Like Jim Thompson, I learned the truth in war. Like Jim, I discovered in Vietnam that faith in myself proved to be the least formidable strength I possessed when confronting organized inhumanity on a greater scale than I conceived possible. In prison, I learned that faith in myself alone was ultimately no match for the cruelty that human beings could devise when they were unencumbered by respect for the God-given dignity of man. This is the lesson many Americans, including Jim, learned in prison. It is, perhaps, the most important lesson we have ever learned. Jim Thompson kept the faith. This is his story." (From Senator John McCain's foreword)

On March 26, 1964, barely four months after arriving in Vietnam, Special Forces Captain Floyd "Jim" Thompson was captured by the Vietcong. He would spend the next nine years in jungle cages and dark prison cells, attempting escape five times, and surviving torture, disease, and starvation. When he was finally released in 1973, he returned to a nation he no longer knew-and to a family that no longer knew him.

Thompson's epic story-and that of his wife and children, who also paid dearly for his sacrifice-is brought to life in this searing reconstruction of one man's torturous journey through the unspeakable horrors of war and its aftermath. Weaving together interviews with Thompson and his family; comments from friends, fellow soldiers, and other POWs; and excerpts from service records, medical reports, and intelligence briefings, journalist Tom Philpott creates a moving and compelling portrait of a complex and heroic figure. Combining the rich historical detail of Neil Sheehan's *A Bright Shining Lie* with the pathos of a James Jones novel, *Glory Denied* is a monumental work of oral history and a much-needed reminder of how far we have come-and how far we have yet to travel-in understanding one of the defining moments of our generation.

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